LANDSEER'S WORKS

Vol. 3 of 4

A.S.C.

.D.E.A

SIR EDWIN LANDSEER, R.A. PINXT

H. BECKWITH. SCULPT

THE INTRUDER.

LONDON. VIRTUE & CO'S ETCHING

THE INTRUDER.

"THE Intruder" was painted in 1819, when Landseer had barely reached his seventeenth birthday. At this period he seems to have given much time and thought to the task of representing the less frequent emotions of animals, maybe with the view of perfecting his already marvellous power of tracing their every attitude.

This picture is well known. It has been exhibited at the British Institution in 1819, at the Exhibition of the Society of British Artists in 1826, and at the Art Treasures Exhibition, Manchester, in 1857. The original was in the possession of the late Sir Philip de M. O. Egerton, Bart., and the engraving dates so far back as 1830.

UNDER THE OLD FIR-TREE.

THIS is *Abies larix*, the common Larch Fir—a tree which delights in an elevated situation, and grows best in barren, exposed land, with no neighbours but a few of its own relations. The late Duke of Athole planted immense quantities of it in various mountainous parts of Scotland; and in situations upwards of sixteen hundred feet above the sea-level, trees of this kind, eighty years old, have yielded six loads each of the finest timber. In the Highland deer forests trees of this size and grandeur are uncommon.

Some branches already bare announce that the fir-tree, like the old forester beneath it, has seen its best days; even now it would afford but poor shelter from a heavy shower. The two deer-stalkers at its foot are evidently resting after a piece of successful sport. The deerhounds, glad of a chance to take breath, and the little Skye terrier complacently regarding the dead stag, lend an additional interest to the sketch.

The original is in the possession of Mr. A. Myers: it has not been otherwise engraved.

THE MARMOZETTES.

THE Marmozette, or Brazilian monkey, when full grown, is from seven to eight inches long, and the tail generally measures nearly a foot. A tuft of white hair sticks out on each side of the head, and thus shows a strange contrast with the surrounding parts, which are black. We quote a short account from the Rev. J. G. Wood's "Natural History:"—"The Marmozet is a most interesting little creature. It is exceedingly sensitive to cold, and when in England is usually occupied in nestling among the materials for its bed, which it heaps up in one corner, and out of which it seldom emerges entirely. It will eat almost any article of food, but is especially fond of insects, which it dispatches in a very adroit manner. . . . . Its fondness for insects is carried so far, that it has been known to pinch out the figures of beetles in an entomological work, and swallow them. . . . . This pretty little monkey is also called the Quistiti, from its peculiar whistling cry when alarmed or provoked."

The two pretty little animals represented here sitting on a large pineapple are intently watching a wasp which has settled just before them, and of which they seem anxious to make a prize. The expressions of the faces are in the artist's best style.

The picture was painted for the Queen, and hangs at Osborne. It has been exhibited three times—(i) at the Royal Academy in 1842, (ii) at Paris in 1855, (iii) at the International Exhibition, 1862. It was engraved by Thomas Landseer, the artist's brother, for the Royal Gallery in 1858.

WAITING FOR THE COUNTESS.

THE graceful bloodhound here represented was given to the late Countess of Blessington by the then King of Naples. This picture was painted by Landseer at the express request of the dog's mistress, whose friend he was, her mansion in Kensington being at that time open to many who had distinguished themselves in the higher walks of literature and art. Lady Blessington edited the *Book of Beauty* and the *Keepsake* for several years, and in addition contributed to several of the leading magazines.

The bloodhound is celebrated in history, and chiefly from that well-known power of scent from which its name originates. Wallace, we are told in the history of Scotland, was on one occasion nearly captured by means of one of these animals; and it is still better known how the Maroon revolt in Jamaica was brought under by their use. Now that our present state of civilisation rightly forbids their being employed to chase a human being, they are heard of only as handsome pets; in fact, they have become the tall guardsmen in the army of domestic dogs.

"Waiting for the Countess" was painted in 1832. It was first engraved, as a book-plate, by Lumb Stocks in 1835, again by C. W. Wass in 1850, and in the present instance by Mr. C. G. Lewis. The original passed, at Lady Blessington's sale, to Mr. Grundy, of Manchester, for two hundred and fifty guineas; by him it was sold to Mr. C. W. Wass, from whom it passed to Messrs. Agnew, and thence to Mr. John Chapman, the present owner.

THE BREAKFAST PARTY.

BREAKFAST is, or should be, a light meal with the canine as with the human race: thus the young Highlander, who is here giving each dog its spoonful in turn, has well chosen the time for disciplining his charges. It is always amusing to compare the grave bearing of older dogs with the undignified haste of the young ones. The dog towards which the lad's finger is directed seems to have been guilty of some indiscretion: either he has tried to take his turn at the spoon twice, or else he has been passed over for trying to help himself from the tub.

"The Breakfast Party" was painted in 1831 for the late Lord Dover, and now belongs to the Right Honourable Viscountess Clifden. It was exhibited as "Too Hot" at the British Institution in 1831, and engraved under that title by J. Outrim for the *Amulet* in 1832. Outrim's engraving is one of the plates in Jesse's "Anecdotes of Dogs."

SANCHO PANZA.

THE picture of which this is an engraving illustrates a scene in "Don Quixote." Sancho, having abdicated the government of Barataria, rode out on his faithful Dapple to rejoin his master, and suddenly fell into a deep hole amongst some ruins. There he lay all night, nor did the vigorous cries with which he greeted the morning succeed in attracting attention. Kind-hearted to the last, he with great difficulty enables his poor donkey to get up, and then shares with him the bread which happens to be in his wallet—supporting the ass with his leg, and himself with the reflection that "a fat sorrow is better than a lean." The spectator will be glad to hear that both were soon afterwards rescued from their plight.

We can hardly expect to see Landseer at his best in illustrating the ideas of others. His own conceptions were so pre-eminently his own, that in following other men's paths of thought he could not but have felt as a stranger on a new track—the path, indeed, lighted up by his own brilliancy, but the eyes rendered, by reason of that very brightness, less fit to unravel the tangled windings. Here the donkey is all that can be desired, but we think Sancho Panza appears to greater advantage in Leslie's picture, which represents him seated at table in the capacity of Governor of Barataria.

The original is now at South Kensington.

THE FRIEND IN SUSPENSE.

THIS noble dog," says Jesse, speaking of the Newfoundland, "may be justly styled the friend and guardian of his master;" none surely more faithful, or so fully possessed of the instinctive desire to save human life.

By the drops of blood on the floor in this picture, the dog's master must have been carried wounded through the room in which the scene lies to that beyond. The earnest, piercing look in the dog's eyes is worthy of all admiration: his is a noble sorrow nobly borne. Those who have the good fortune to possess an animal of this kind cannot fail to notice how wonderfully real is the attitude in which the dog is drawn.

"The Friend in Suspense" was painted in 1834, two years after "Waiting for the Countess," with which we think it should certainly be contrasted. A large lithograph by Jacob Bell, Esq., is in the collection of Her Majesty the Queen. There are engravings by B. P. Gibbon, made in 1837, and by J. C. Webb, besides the work of Mr. C. G. Lewis before us.

CHEVY CHACE.

OF all the old English ballads with which childhood makes us acquainted, "Chevy Chace" is the most familiar. It will be remembered how, in the then unsettled state of the Border, a peaceful hunting party was changed into a deadly strife, resulting in the deaths of both Earl Percy of Northumberland and the Scottish Earl Douglas. Here we have merely the hunting scene; the stag, whose last hour has come, is yet making good use of its horns against its canine assailants.

This cannot be considered to belong to the first class of Landseer's pictures; yet it has a place in a collection of engravings like the present, inasmuch as it is a specimen of his treatment of an historical subject. The bow on the left of the picture would, we fear, have the string hanging quite loose when strung, and the dog immediately under the stag's head can hardly be considered satisfactory.

"Chevy Chace" was painted in 1826, the year in which Landseer became an A.R.A. The original hangs at Woburn Abbey, Bedfordshire, the seat of the Duke of Bedford.

HIGHLAND MUSIC.

HOW the artist's heart must have been in this picture, and how he must have striven to hand down to posterity some of his own interest in these homely objects! Each dog in turn arrests the eye, and then we proceed to admire the high, clear forehead of the old Highlander. Some of Landseer's most interesting pictures turn on the different emotions excited by the same cause in dogs of different breeds and ages. We have learned by this time that no trifle will disturb the equanimity of a grave old deerhound, but the three small dogs are of course looking with all their eyes, and listening with all their ears; one of them has perfectly the appearance of howling in chorus. In the picture the colouring is very subdued, the old man's red stockings forming the brightest spot in the whole: the gleam of light in the background skilfully brings out the size of the room.

"Highland Music" was painted for the late Mr. Vernon, and was presented by him to the nation in 1847: it has been engraved for the *Art Journal*, and there is also a lithograph by Soulange Tessier.

TOO HOT TO HOLD.

THIS little sketch is quite one of Landseer's own; nothing could be better shown than the dog's checked rush, its attention entirely concentrated on the steaming piece of meat, and the cautiously raised fore-paw. The steam has only risen to a certain height, which shows the saucepan to have just been turned over.

Those who will not allow reason to brutes assign importance to the instinctive, nay, automatic, way in which a dog that has been scalded will for some time after reject all hot things alike. In support of the other view of the question, Mr. Wood, in his "Man and Beast, Here and Hereafter," gives an anecdote of a little dog which, at its master's bidding, took a penny off a red-hot bar of iron, and of its own accord then sat down to wait until the coin should grow cool.

THE TWA DOGS.

THE picture of which this is an engraving was painted in 1822, but a picture containing a rather different version of the same subject was exhibited at the British Institution in 1858. The former has been engraved by B. P. Gibbon and also by C. G. Lewis, and is to be found in the Sheepshanks Collection; the latter has not yet met with an engraver, and we do not know in whose possession it is.

In the poem of Burns which this picture is designed to illustrate, Cæsar, the Newfoundland, has not been identified with any particular dog; but Luath, the collie, was the poet's favourite companion. In the picture, however, the Newfoundland is "Neptune," the late Mr. Gosling's dog, while the collie is unidentified.

"Whiles scour'd awa in lang excursion,
An' worry'd ither in diversion;
Until wi' daffin weary grown,
Upon a knowe they sat them down,
And there began a lang digression
About the lords o' the creation."

It is not likely a better illustration of these lines will ever be produced.

IN THE GLEN.

THE drawing which has here been engraved under the title of "In the Glen" appears in Mr. Graves's catalogue as "Deer in Repose." The date, we notice, is 1820, and the artist's first visit to Scotland was paid to Sir Walter Scott at Abbotsford in 1824. Some interest attaches to the piece, as being probably his first attempt at drawing those animals with whose forms he must afterwards have been so familiar. At this time (1820) Landseer began systematically to study these monarchs of the glen, and it is probable the deer before us were sketched in some English park to which he had access.

Some of the usual faults of a young artist may be noted as regards the grouping, which is very stiff, and wants the air of reality; but there is no lack of truthfulness in the details. Bearing in mind that his brush had already produced pictures like "Alpine Mastiffs reanimating a Distressed Traveller" and "Fighting Dogs getting Wind," we must be content to suppose the defect in grouping due to a carelessness occasioned by the desire to learn rather how to represent the animals themselves than how to work them up into a picture.

Shepherds of Strasburg (1840).

A Market Scene (1840).

are inclined to think that the "Woodcutters" (Fig. 59) may have been executed after his visit to the Continent, as the scene is a wintry one and full of strength and enjoyment of exercise—qualities which are not observable in his foreign sketches, despite their rare beauty, or even in the previous sketches of the year. In the next year he exhibited no picture, but in 1842 he appeared again in full vigour with his "Otter and Salmon," and "The Sanctuary" at the Royal Academy, and "Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home," at the British Institution. He also drew in this year his first design for "The Challenge," so that this year may be taken as

FIG. 68.—SWISS MULES (1840).

the commencement of his pictures of deer, remarkable for their sad, spiritual suggestiveness. The deerstalker had given place to the poet, and the gladness of action to the solemnity of reflection.

In 1843 he painted his "Defeat of Comus" for the Queen's summer-house in Buckingham Palace Gardens, of which a sketch was left to the nation by Jacob Bell; a picture of terrible force, and the first in which he showed his power in the domain of pure fancy. The next year appeared the "Challenge" and the "Otter Hunt," a sketch for which fine but painful picture is engraved on PLATE XXII.

The Otter Hunt (1844).

Plate XXII.

In the ten years through which this chapter extends he may be said to have executed his finest work of pure pathos, his finest statuesque study of a dog, his best picture of Highland character, and a most beautiful series of sketches abroad. He had also commenced his pictures of spiritual poetry and pure fancy; but he had passed through a severe illness, and his art had become more thoughtful if not more sad.

FIG. 69.—LLYN Y DINAS (1842).

Fig. 70.—Loch Laggan (1847).

CHAPTER V.

1842—73.

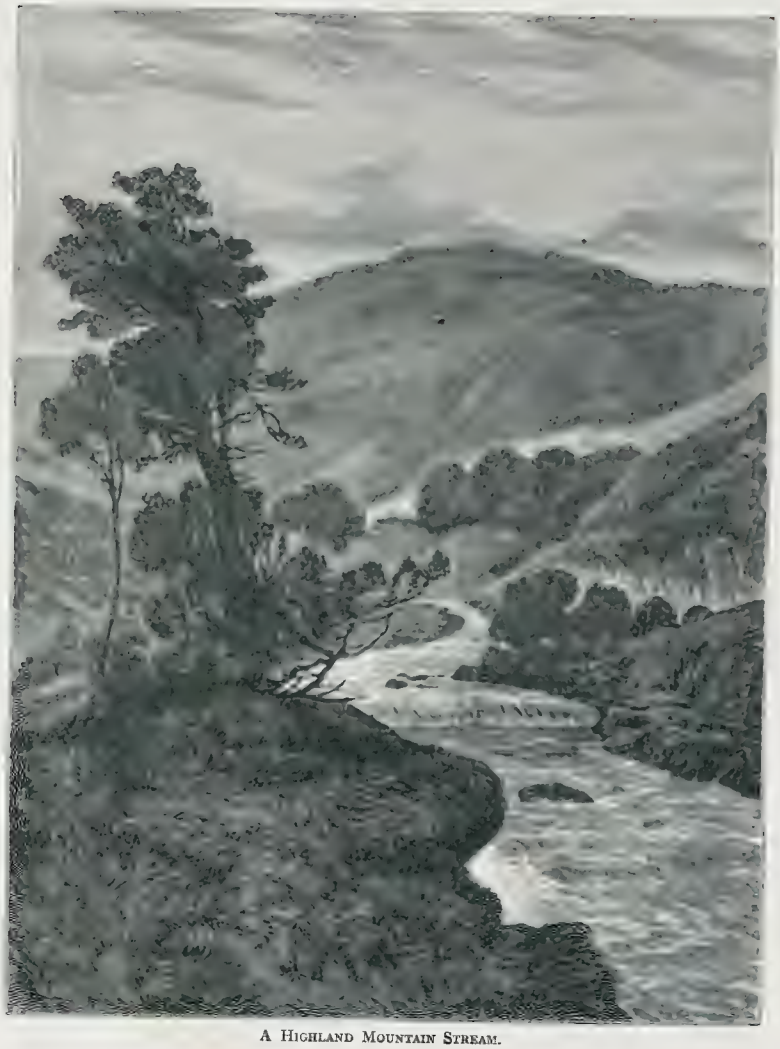
LANDSEER'S tour on the Continent appears to have had little effect upon his art. Until the year 1845, or five years after it, he does not appear to have used one of his studies for a picture. Neither the scenery, the inhabitants, nor the animals, seem to have affected his imagination to any appreciable extent. New scenes and associations had such a remarkable effect upon him when he went for the first time to Scotland in 1824 that we might have expected a different result, and any one who had looked over his portfolio on his return and seen the matchless series of studies, of which we have been able to give so many specimens, would have been justified in prophesying that they would give birth to as fine a series of pictures. But it was not so; either the depressing circumstances under which he travelled may have given him a distaste

for the records of his travel, or it was too late for his mind to fertilise the new seed. However that may be, we find in his after-work no alteration in his subjects or his method of treatment, except such as belonged to changes, mental and physical, which he underwent; an increasing prevalence of sad and terrible thoughts in his finished compositions, accompanied by a broader and more philosophical spirit; and in his execution greater wonders of manual dexterity and less sound painting—the former no doubt due to his increasing attacks of depression, the latter partly to the failure of his eyesight.

But if the Continent did not greatly increase his range of art, we may be thankful

FIG. 71.—AN ENGLISH HOMESTEAD.

that it did not, as in the case of Wilkie and others, damage it. On the contrary, whatever effect it had was for good, and though we do not reckon as among his greatest works such pictures as "The Shepherd's Prayer," "Geneva," "Refreshment," "A Dialogue at Waterloo," and "The Maid and the Magpie," we should be sorry to miss them from the collection of our memory. The first of these appeared in the Royal Academy of 1845, without a title; and in this year he painted for Mr. Vernon a picture, not large in size or important in subject, but which, as a piece of painting, he never excelled, viz., "The Cavalier's Pets," now in the National Gallery. "Refreshment" appeared the next year, in which also appeared his splendid "Stag at Bay," and the beautiful pair of "Peace" and "War," pictures which deserve



A Highland Mountain Stream.

Plate XXIII.

notice here as being the first in which he showed himself capable of moving us not only by the circumstances of individual life, but by scenes symbolizing the common lot of mankind—as a poet not only of men but of man, not only pathetic but reflective. It is only a true poet, and an original one, who could invest such well-worn subjects with such new interest. Is it not also a link between him and Hogarth, that we

FIG. 72.—THE FORESTER'S SON (1849).

do not so much look at as read some of his pictures?* How full of "matter" is the "Peace," with its beautiful background of fair green down speckled with sheep and its calm expanse of sunny sea, with its children playing at "cat's-cradle," and the lambs peeping into the rusty cannon's mouth! More wonderful even is the "War,"

* See Charles Lamb's "Essay on Hogarth."

with its distance shut out with rolls of smoke, and the terrible ruin of man, beast, and home in the foreground.

The most notable picture of next year (1847) was "The Drive of Deer, Glen Orchay," of the sketch for which we give an engraving in PLATE XXXVIII., one of the finest and most original compositions of sport in the Highlands; but this year also produced his second (the Duke of Wellington's) picture of "Van Amburgh," which is worse than the first (the Queen's). To 1847 also belongs the sketch of

FIG. 73.—SITTING FOR A PORTRAIT.

"Loch Laggan" (Fig. 70), possibly made for a picture of "Her Majesty Sketching at Loch Laggan," which he executed this year, and which, like the sketch, is in the possession of the Queen. The year after (1848) was signalised by two pictures, equal in power and execution, but as opposite in sentiment as mirth and murder. From his first drawing of a dead stag to this terrible "Random Shot," where a little fawn is trying to suck its mother, that lies dead upon the snow, Landseer seemed to feel far more the sadness of destruction than the "glory of the chase," and at times, as in the game card at Woburn (1825), to which we have alluded in Chapter III., the cruelty

of sport seems to have smitten him with its pain and compelled him to record it in all its naked horror. To such a nightmare of imagination we owe the almost unbearable torture of the "Otter Hunt" and the "Random Shot," and the still more heart-tearing picture of "Man proposes, God disposes" was surely born of a similar disease. Of all these pictures, however, the "Random Shot" is the wholesomest and the most pitiful. There is nothing sensational or savage about it: it is only too sad and too true. All these pictures, for the intensity of the horror of naked truth, can find an English parallel only in the works of Hogarth. Still more like that great master is the other and very different picture, "Alexander and Diogenes," an

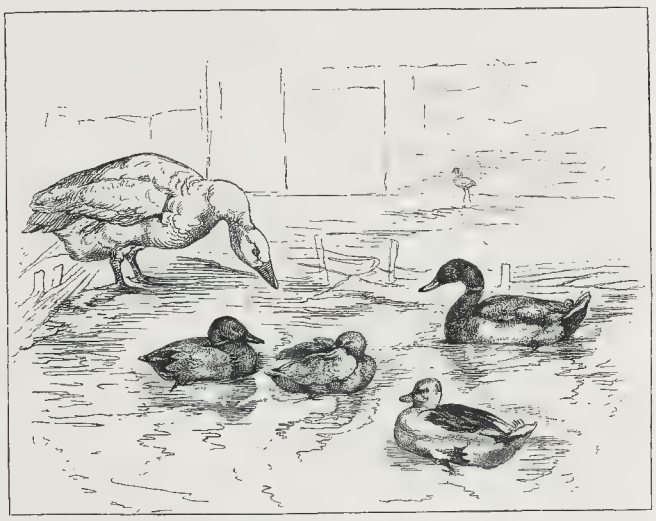


FIG. 74.—THE DUCK POND.

extremely fine piece of burlesque, in which he has made his dogs truly actors, playing their parts in a human historical comedy. In the Diogenes we recognise one of the dogs in "Comical Dogs," little changed in expression, and in Alexander, with a subtle satire on the bumptious vulgarity of great people, the same type of animal as in "Low Life" and "Jack in Office." The solemn-looking flunkeys he has satirised with two bloodhounds of servile pomposity and magnificent physique, and the group of courtiers by dogs of various breeds, two of which—a dandy hound and a scandal-loving spaniel—are exchanging witty remarks to the disparagement of the philosopher of the tub.

A Waterfall.

Plate XXIV.

The interest always taken by Landseer in peasant life is more frequently exhibited in his Scottish than his English sketches; but in "An English Homestead" (Fig. 71) we have a charming study of English farm-buildings and trees, with small but interesting groups of men and dogs. Landseer was always faithful to his early impressions. He lived and died in the residence in which he first "set up house" in St. John's Wood, improving it as his increasing means allowed, but never seeking to alter it. "Be it ever so humble," &c., may be said to have been his motto, notwithstanding his social distinction, and the depth of his family affections was never to be questioned. A beautiful instance of this is shown by his most loving and lovable picture of his old father executed in this year (1848), which alone would entitle him to a high rank amongst portrait painters. England always remained the land of his affections as Scotland was of his imagination: foreign countries were, as we have seen, powerless to lay hold of one or the other. Even the beauty of the scenery of Switzerland does not seem to have disturbed from their throne in his mind the glens of Scotland or the vales of England; for the one picture of "Geneva" we have many such scenes as those in our PLATES XXIII., XXIV., and XXV., the last of which is the most elaborate study of trees from his hand which we have seen.

In 1849 appeared the "Forester's Family"—a forester's wife followed by fawns, and preceded by her sturdy son, carrying a pair of antlers over his head in the manner shown in "The Forester's Son" (Fig. 72). In the picture the boy "is not seen as here represented, but rather sideways."* It is evidently a portrait, as is also Fig. 73, though this is a humorous one, reminding one again of Hogarth. If we put animals out of our consideration, Landseer was never more happy than when treating children.† Whether humble or wellborn, whether portraits or not, his feeling was always tender and true. The infant at the breast, as in "The Highland Breakfast," the child playing with his father's dirk in "The Drover's Departure," "H.R.H. Princess Alice in her Cradle," not to mention any others, are wonderful instances, not only of picturesque treatment, but of knowledge and observation, such as could scarcely be expected of a man who was not a father. They always have the true look and form of babies; not nambypamby, doll-like little creatures, but real sensible babies, with no grace but the true baby-grace—hard to appreciate and harder still to draw. In his studies of elder children, as in this "Forester's Son," and portraits like that of "Lord Alexander Russell" (PLATE XL.), he is equally successful in giving the character and spirit belonging to the age; and the exquisite grace and fancy of his portraits of young girls with their pets, such as the well-known "Beauty's Bath,"

* *Art Journal*, July, 1875.

† We use the words "happy" and "treating" in their artistic senses, but we have no doubt that the passage would be equally true if interpreted according to the ordinary use of the words.

Study of Oak-trees.

"The Sutherland Family," and "Miss Blanche Egerton," with her cockatoo and bountiful hair, or in character, as "Little Red Riding Hood" (Lady Rachael Russell), and "Cottage Industry" (Lady Louisa Russell), the mention of which will immediately suggest others to the reader's mind, raise Sir E. Landseer to the highest rank as a painter of children. Without the colour or the subtlety of character which we see in Sir Joshua Reynolds or the superfineness of Sir Thomas Lawrence, they are quite equal

FIG. 75.—HOODED FALCON.

to the first in naturalness and to the second in real refinement, and are without the mannerism or affectation of either.

As to his portraits of men, the specimens we give of Sir Walter Scott and Paganini, and the portrait of his father to which we have alluded, are sufficient proof of his varied power. The sketch of "Paganini" (Plate XXVI.) again reminds us of Hogarth, not because it is, but because it is not, a caricature. The wild hair and action, the peculiar figure, the pocket-handkerchief, and eye-glass, are all, we are assured, "to

Nicolo Paganini (1840).

Plate XXVI.

the life" without exaggeration. Nor were his portraits of ladies inferior in their way. His contributions to the "Book of Beauty," and other portraits of noble ladies, show a feeling for elegance which never degenerates into artificiality, and breathe an air of distinction in which there is nothing of "fine-ladyism."

In 1850 appeared "A Dialogue at Waterloo"—a picture which had for some years been expected by the public, who knew that it was one of those commissioned by Mr. Vernon before his death. We do not know whether he visited the locality between 1840 and 1850, but, at all events, the landscape was, we believe, studied on the spot, and was the only contribution of importance which the Continent furnished to Landseer's art.* The next year came "Midsummer Night's Dream" and "The Monarch of the Glen," the former of which is the most beautiful "illustration" that he ever painted. As a work of pure fancy, it ranks with his "Defeat of Comus," to which it is the natural companion in the history of his art-life. In these two pictures he showed powers of fanciful imagination not exhibited before or after, and that he could exercise it in opposite directions and enter into the spirit of others' dreams. The two pictures are as different in sentiment as light from darkness: in one a terrible orgy, of sensuality such as has never been painted in such repulsive force before, if we except the prints of Hogarth; in the other the liveliest frolic, the most light-hearted mirth that the youngest fancy could conceive. The figure of Titania is not fairylike enough, but the sprites and elves are as full of tricksy mirth almost as Cruikshank's. These two pictures are, as we have said, natural companions. They show the two extremes of terror and joy between which his fancy ranged. They are the "Peace" and "War" of his imagination—the "Night" and "Morning" of his soul.

It is pleasant to think that, shaded as the concluding years of his life were by clouds which at times almost concealed his reason, the bright side of his mind—his humour and spirit—never altogether deserted him. When near his end, and occupying himself at times with drawing reminiscences of his former pictures, it was not gloomy or terrible thoughts that his pencil traced, but his "French Hog" and "British Boar," his "Old Dog (Trim) looks like a Picture," and other amusing or sunny memories; and in his last years of work, "Man Proposes but God Disposes" (the terribly suggestive picture (1864) where Arctic bears in their native ice-world have disturbed the grave of one of the ill-fated Sir John Franklin's ill-fated companions) has for its complement the playful picture of a bullfinch and squirrels, with its jocose title, "Piper and a Pair of Nutcrackers." In 1869, the two currents of his mind were still undivided, as was seen in the "Ptarmigan Hill" and "The Swannery invaded by Eagles," a picture of magnificent power, in which his youthful fire and

* It was also used in "The Shepherd's Prayer."

ambition seem to flare out unexpectedly at the last. In 1872 came two pictures prophetic of death, both in the evident decay in the master's physical power and the religious solemnity of their subjects—"The Font" and "The Lion and the Lamb." One also was prophetic in another sense, viz., a translation into form of the dream of the Hebrew seer of a time when "the lion shall lie down with the lamb." This picture reminds us of Blake, in the naked simplicity and the unsophisticated grandeur of its design, and the original drawing was even more like in spirit to the author of the "Tiger," for in it the lamb is lying on one of the paws of the lion, as a child lies on its nurse's arm. This was the last effort of his imagination. In the following year, on the 1st of October, he died, aged seventy-one.

So ended the history both of his life and his art, any notice of which would scarcely be complete without mention of his large and elaborate composition of 1860,

FIG. 76.—MACAWS.

called "Flood in the Highlands," which Mr. Stephens rates as "probably the strongest of all his pictures."* It is not the purpose of this book to deal with his life, nor have we materials to do so if we would. In our rapid and, we fear, very incomplete survey of his art, we have endeavoured to show the gradual development of it (1) in skill, (2) range of subject, (3) in thought, and we have purposely refrained from a lengthy disquisition upon any point, in order not to detain the reader upon the road; but now we have reached the end of our journey there are a few points which deserve greater attention than we were able to pay to them at the time, and

* Page 131.

a few that we have purposely passed without any notice at all. To the most important of the former, viz., his treatment of dogs and deer—we propose to devote separate chapters, in which, if we fail to add anything new, we shall be able, at least, to sum up and emphasize the remarks scattered through the foregoing pages. To these we shall add a short chapter upon his horses, more by way of contrast than on account of their importance. For the rest of this chapter we have selected a few of his sketches, to illustrate a few facts of minor importance, but of much interest with regard to his life.

The first of these is his treatment of birds, animals which, with the solitary exception of the study of vultures (Fig. 29), he drew with unvarying skill. One of his earliest drawings was a very neat one of a parrot in pencil, and one of his last pictures was entirely devoted to birds—the "Swannery attacked by Eagles." In Figs. 74, 75, and 76 we have studies of ducks, a falcon, and macaws, all undated. We cannot remember any picture in which Landseer introduced tame ducks, but this is probably due to ignorance or defective memory; but wild ducks are introduced with great effect into some of his pictures, and in one, "The Widow" (1825), they form the subject. This honour was, if we mistake not, shared only by eagles and swans, if we except his studies of game. Besides the picture so often mentioned, in which these two birds are associated in one grand composition, he painted a small picture called "The Eagle's Nest" (1833), presented to the nation by Mr. Sheepshanks, in which the bird, sitting on a ledge of bare rock, and surrounded by the desolation of the mountain-tops, is very similar to that of "An Eagle" (Fig. 84). Other birds he only introduced as objects of subsidiary interest into his compositions, but they were always painted with wonderful dexterity; indeed, in no animals did he show greater skill in representing the texture and substance than in his birds. His feathers were feathers, not only in colour and lightness and drawing, but in consistency; his beaks and talons were exact in their degree of horniness as in their outline. His use of them in his compositions was varied and always effective. No one who knows the pictures will forget the hen and chickens in the "Drover's Departure" and "The Highland Shepherd's Home," the swan in "Bolton Abbey," the wild-fowl in "The Sanctuary," or the gulls in "Time of Peace." His pictures of hawking are well-known, and his macaws, cockatoos, and other pet birds, suggest at once the names of the several children and ladies into whose portraits they were so charmingly introduced.

The only quarrel we have against the pets, ornithological or otherwise, is the time that was spent in painting them which might have been devoted to works of more general, enduring, and noble interest. His illustrations to the "Waverley Novels," and his fine pictures from "Comus" and the "Midsummer Night's Dream," suggest that he left comparatively unworked one of the richest veins of his mental

wealth. This view is confirmed by the sketch in illustration of "The Lady of the Lake" (Fig. 37), and our next two woodcuts, "Friar Tuck" and "Don Quixote and the Lions" (Fig. 78), both of which are full of vigour and character, especially the latter, which contains the elements of a picture singularly suited to the display of his varied power. That he fully appreciated the form and character of Sancho Panza is shown by his picture of that worthy, bequeathed to the nation by Mr. Sheepshanks, and he had too much fine feeling for literature and for all that was noble and chivalrous not to make us sure that his Don would have done justice both to the author and the knight; but whether or not our expectations as to the master

FIG. 77.—FRIAR TUCK (1834).

would have been confirmed, we have no hesitation in saying that his Rosinante was a loss to the world. In the sheet of these hasty sketches will be seen what was to have been the "car with the flags," which contained the "two fierce lions, which the general of Oran is sending to Court, as a present to his Majesty. Larger never came from Africa into Spain. . . . They are hungry, not having eaten to-day. . . . At which Don Quixote, smiling a little, said, 'To me your lion whelps! Your lion whelps to me! By the living God, those who sent them hither shall see whether I am a man to be scared by lions!'" Below is seen a sketch of the Don, who determined to fight the lions on foot, lest Rosinante should be terrified at the

sight of them. "Upon this he leaped from his horse, flung aside his lance, braced on his shield, and drew his sword; and marching slowly, with marvellous intrepidity and an undaunted heart, he planted himself before the car, devoutly commending himself first to God and then to his mistress, Dulcinea." The three mounted figures are evidently intended for Don Diego de Miranda on his mottled-grey mare, Sancho on his donkey, and the carter on a mule, endeavouring to get well out of the way before the cage is opened. The ultimate form which the composition was intended to take is hardly indicated in the scattered sketches, two of which do not seem to

FIG. 78.—DON QUIXOTE AND THE LIONS.

belong to the same subject as the rest. We should have liked to see even such a rough sketch of it as that for a composition, never to be completed, of "Friar Tuck." In this, with a few rough pencil lines, he has sketched out a picture complete in its grouping and even in many of its details. How much can be indicated by a few dexterous touches was never better shown than in the figure on the left, seated upon a dead stag, and the two dogs on the right, though the masterly sketch for the "Otter Hunt" (PLATE XXII.) displays the same extraordinary power. They both, and many others in our collection, exhibit that gift of conception that made Land-

Study of Rams' Heads (1845).

Study of Rams' Heads (1845).

Plate XXVII.

seer's pictures spring in living unity from his brain like Minerva from the head of Jupiter. Except in cases in which the subject was not spontaneous, as the "Dialogue at Waterloo," or when a design had to be altered to suit a special purpose, as in his drawing of "The Beggar," there are no signs of labour in the composition, no putting together of parts: they were all births, rather than constructions. This power of conception was so strong and varied, that in looking back

FIG. 79.—CONFESSION.

over his very numerous works it is hard to find one which suggests another in its arrangement. One instance of this in his early years we have mentioned,* and another may be found in the two compositions on PLATE XXX. (the "Hare and Foxes" and "The Feast interrupted") one of which belongs to 1824 and the other to 1838, and no doubt others may be found; but as a rule, a new subject clothed itself as naturally in a new form as a new idea in a new phrase. This instinct of composition is visible in his earliest works† and in his slightest sketches, such as

* Page 41. † Page 1.

Bison.

A Bison.

Plate XXVIII.

those just mentioned, or the "Donkey Driver" (Fig. 63), the slightest and hastiest of all. In all his works, sketches or finished, we only know of one awkward composition—a study of deer, in 1820. It was the same in his details as in his great compositions, many of which could be cut up into several pictures, perfect in themselves, although they fit into their places without any assertion of individual existence. As to his animals, they seem to group themselves—as indeed animals do, to

FIG. 80.—A GIPSY ENCAMPMENT.

the artist's eye; of instances of which this volume is full, from the first sketch on page 1 to the study of three rams' heads on PLATE XXVII., which reminds one of the group in "The Drover's Departure," and which for variety and beauty of line and light and shade, is perhaps the most wonderful in this volume.

As examples of Landseer's mastery over his materials, and power of representing every variety of texture and substance, the other study of rams' heads on the same

plate is equally wonderful. Both of these are executed in black and white chalk upon rough paper, the grain of which has been taken advantage of by Landseer to heighten the effect and economize his labour. Even in our woodcut we perceive the fibre and strength of the horns, the softness of the mouths, and the cool fleshiness of the nostrils, while the drawing is simply perfect; and much the same may be said of the masterly studies of the bison in PLATE XXVIII., executed in the same way, and belonging to the same owner (the Duke of Westminster). In these studies his technical power may be said to have reached its superlative of mastery.

It is seldom that we come upon any of Landseer's studies without regret that

FIG. 81.—A RACE-COURSE.

they have not been worked up into pictures; but this is the case with Fig. 79, "Confession," in which he seems to have intended to supplement his picture of the St. Bernard mastiffs rescuing a traveller's body by another of a monk of that establishment rescuing a human soul. The successful execution of this idea did not lie within the range of Landseer's art, great as it was. Though, as we have seen, he could introduce into his pictures human figures admirably expressive of domestic humour and sentiment, and could paint portraits remarkable for their grace and character, his power of expression of deep emotion or spiritual feeling was as much

confined to animals and scenery as Turner's to landscape. If we wish for grace we may turn to his female portraits; if for character, to his "Highland Whiskey Still" or his "David Gellatley;" if we wish for sentiment, to his "Drover's Departure" or his "Time of Peace;" and we shall find it in his human figures to a degree which will bear contrast with the animals; but if we want elevation of sentiment we must turn to "The Sanctuary;" if we want deep and sorrowful thought, to the "Night" and "Morning," or if we want faith, to "The Lion and the Lamb." The only exception

FIG. 82.—SKETCH OF A DOG (1871).

to this, and it is one that proves the rule, is the filial reverence and love that beam from every touch in his portrait of his father.

Landseer may be said to have had two countries—England and Scotland; the one of his affections, the other of his imagination. In the one he had been born and bred, had made his first studies and achieved his first reputation: he had wandered in her fields, and sketched her quiet cows and sheep, and made his first essays in landscape, of which Fig. 81 is probably one. In the other he had the first great impulse to his imagination: her mountains and glens inspired him with a love for beauty and wildness and solitude. The delight of being alone amongst magnificent scenery is constantly observable in his works, and in none more so than some of the landscapes in this

The Grealoch (1857).

Shetland Pony and Hound (1857).

volume, or in his beautiful etching of "The Traveller's Rest." This led him to sympathize with the free wild life of poachers and gipsies, and gave birth to such compositions as "The Poacher's Bothy" and "A Gipsy's Encampment" (Fig. 80).* He may also be said to have had two tastes—love of sport and the love of animals. How these came into collision we have already shown, and how he never shrank from painting a scene because it was painful. We have tried to seek in the former part of this chapter for the reason of this latter peculiarity; but perhaps the real origin of it

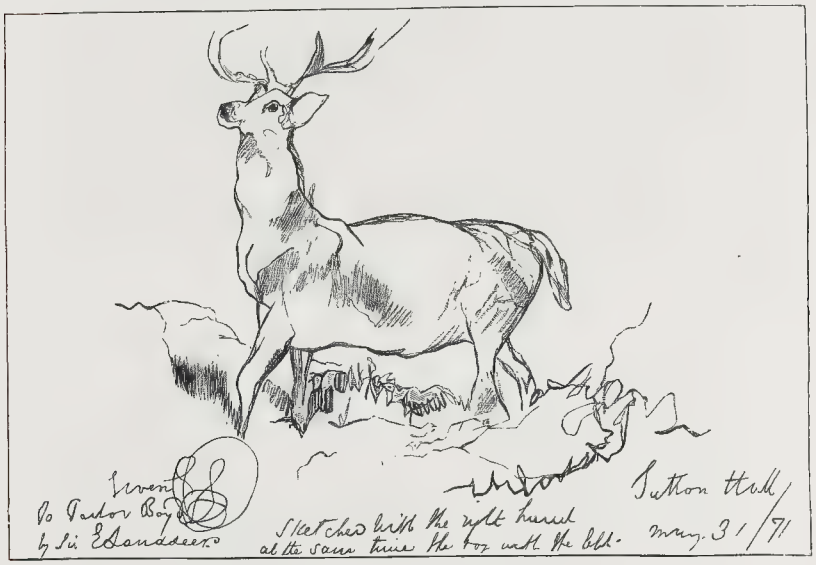


FIG. 83.—SKETCH OF A STAG (1871).

was the inherent force of his artistic impulses, which prevented him from hesitating about the subjective effect which his work would produce. From the earliest time we find him studying and drawing in any place, and from any subjects which would afford food for his artistic appetite: at home, at the menagerie, in the fields, in the shambles, at the bull and bear baiting, he, with pencil in hand, drew insatiably, without regard to the sentiment, but only careful to represent it truthfully, whatever it was. So in later life he would draw such a study as that of "The Grealoch," where a man is

* The background of this picture is said to be similar to that in his picture of "The Bedford Family" (1824). See *Art Journal*.

The Feast Interrupted (1838).

Hare and Foxes (1824).

beginning to skin a deer, or such a graceful group of pets as the "Shetland Pony and Hound" (PLATE XXIX.)—instinct with life, beauty, and happiness—with the same care and truth, both as to execution and feeling.

He also may be said to have had two brains, physical as well as intellectual: with regard to the latter pair, the artistic, and what, for want of a better antithesis, we may call the literary brain, we have already said much; but with regard to the apparent physical duality of his brain, its power of conducting two different operations at one and the same time, we have deferred observation to the present time as a matter

FIG. 84.—AN EAGLE (1852).

altogether beside our main object. It is, however, too remarkable a phenomenon, both from a scientific and an artistic point of view, to pass without notice, and we are able to produce ocular demonstration of the fact, viz., facsimiles of two sketches of different subjects produced simultaneously, the one with his left hand and the other with his right. That this was not a solitary instance of his exhibition of this remarkable power is evident from a story told by Mr. Stephens,* on the authority "of a Royal Academician of unquestioned sagacity, and remarkable for his accomplishments and acute powers of observation." The scene of Mr. Stephens's

* Pages 86, 87.

story is "the house of a gentleman not now unknown in the upper ranks of London society," and the feat performed is thus described: "A piece of paper was laid on the table, and Sir Edwin, a pencil in each hand, drew simultaneously, and without hesitation, with the one hand the profile of a stag's head and all its antlers complete, and with the other hand the perfect profile of a horse's head. Both drawings were full," Mr. Stephens continues, "of energy and spirit, and although, as the occasion compelled, they were not finished sketches, they were, together and individually, quite as good as even the master himself was accustomed to produce by one at a time, and with his right hand alone. The drawing by the left hand was not inferior to that by the right hand." We think our left-hand drawing (Fig. 82) is superior to the other (Fig. 83), but neither of them can be said to have the merit ascribed to the two mentioned by Mr. Stephens.

Landseer also had, as we all have, two spirits: one light and one dark, one gloomy and one gay, the one fearing and the other hoping. From first to last these alternated in his life and in his art, but the extreme of each was more intense than in ordinary mortals. Let the reader accept as the last types of these extremes (Figs. 84 and 85), the eagle tearing out the bowels of its prey, and the mother and child looking at the little chicks that are struggling towards a larger life.

FIG. 85.—LOOKING OUT.

FIG. 86.—CÆSAR.

CHAPTER VI.

DOGS.

IT is not difficult to find many reasons why Landseer should have given us more pictures of dogs than of any other animals. One reason, sufficient of itself, is, that they are the best companions of man, and he, being eminently human, and caring about animals chiefly in their human relations, naturally made them his chief study. He may be said to have painted other animals as an artist, a poet, and a natural historian, and he, as such, painted also dogs; but dogs alone he painted as a friend. We have in our first chapter expressed our opinion that the first animal he drew ought to have been a dog, and we have since discovered, what we should have known before, viz., that the frame in the South Kensington Museum which holds nine early drawings of the boy Edwin, contains one (the earliest of them all) of a dog, executed at the age of five. It is apparently a fox-hound, and is altogether a marvellous production for a boy of his age—one of the artistic wonders of the world. After the death of his Brutus he despaired of finding another to take the place of that favourite, and said he would try to make up in quantity for the quality which he had lost, and ever afterwards was attended by a body-guard of several dogs; as if to show the force of this habit, he has humorously drawn his own portrait with a dog on each side of him,

apparently criticizing his work,—which would, we rather think, bear the criticism even of a dog. We speak diffidently, never having experienced the subjective impressions of a dog; but we cannot help believing that the manner in which Landseer drew the forms and expressed the character of the canine race would have been

FIG. 87.—A LETTER CARRIER (1842).

rewarded with the gratitude if not the full satisfaction of such a critic. He may occasionally have shown the artificial culture of the animal too much to please canine Conservatives; what he looked upon as cleverness they might despise as conceit; what he thought fineness of breed they might condemn as degeneration;

what he considered faithfulness they might rank as servility; what culture, as loss of caste; but on the whole, seeing that he was but a man, they must, we fancy, have allowed that he was a good artist, a fair judge of character, and meant kindly by them.

But to man he must now and, we think, ever, seem most profoundly learned in dog-nature, and the best dog artist that ever lived. Although "the essence of dog" may be, as Mr. Ruskin says somewhere, in Veronese's hounds, though Snyders excel in representing the savage onslaught of these animals in the chase, and though all Mulready's dogs are as good as Landseer's, yet no other artist has painted them in such variety, both of form and character, as he; none has represented the depth and

FIG. 80.—CORA (1821).

truth of their feelings so fully; none has devoted, as he did, a lifetime to their study, till he may be almost said to have "exhausted" the dog, as far as one man could. But the dog is as inexhaustible almost as man: his races are as many, his characters as diverse. He changes with every climate and with every need that man has for him in any shape. From the mastiff to the toy-terrier, from the greyhound to the turnspit, their differences of form, of habit, of instinct, of utility, are so various that any attempt to classify, let alone exhaust them, is a labour in comparison with which those of Hercules even seem puny.

One distinction of physical quality only shall we attempt to make, and this is, that

Dogs setting a Hare (1824).

The Angler's Guard (1824).

Plate XXXI.

all dogs may be classed under two heads: the hard dog and the soft dog. To the former belong the deerhound, the greyhound, the collie, the bulldog, and the true terrier; to the latter, the mastiff, the bloodhound, the setter, and the spaniel. In the one class the joints appear to be made of iron, and the sinews of whipcord; in the latter the joints appear loose, and the sinews but half-strung. We are quite prepared to learn from someone better informed as to their anatomy that the difference which we have sought to draw is a mere optical illusion, due only to some external accident of looseness of skin or quantity of hair; but that will make no difference in the fact—

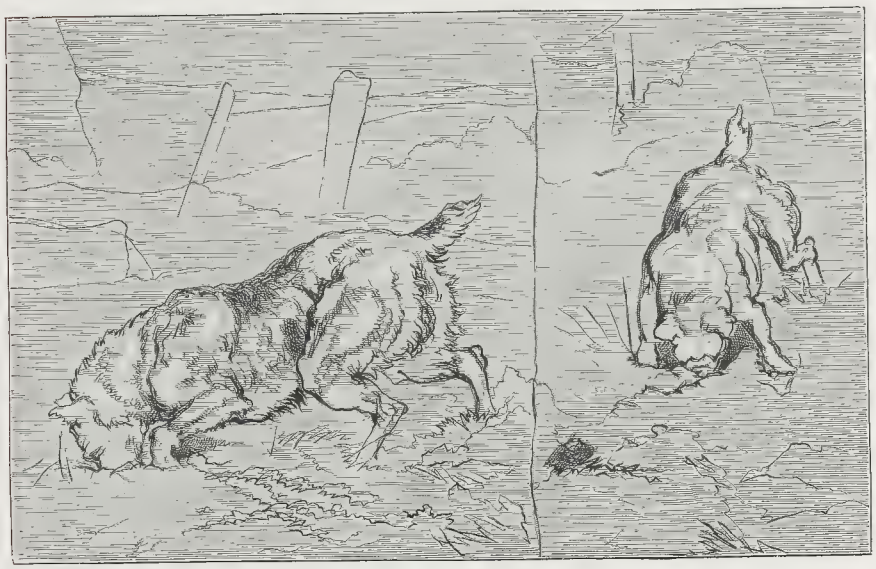


Fig. 89.—In the Warren (1824).

illusion or not—that such a distinction exists, is justified by the general appearance of the animals, and is of such importance to the artist that we can easily conceive one who, being perfectly capable of representing to the life the jimp and wiry form of a black and tan terrier, would be puzzled to draw the loose and supple limbs of a setter. That Landseer was an equal master of either, and that they are as much discriminated in his works as in those of nature, is no small praise to him as an artist.

We may, however, well take for granted that with regard to all physical peculiarities, whether of form or colour, hardness or softness, short hair or long hair, large

Dogs at Bay (1828).

On the Watch (1830).

bones or small bones, loose joints, or tight joints, breed or mongrelism, there was no difference, however slight, which he did not perceive, and was not able to transfer to canvas with a brush as deft as a magic wand. We may also take for granted that there was scarcely any breed of dog, or dog of no breed, known in England during his lifetime, which did not at some time or other engage his pencil. In these respects, at least, his treatment of the dog may be said to be almost exhaustive. In this chapter alone we have Scotch terriers (Figs. 87 and 99, and PLATES XXXII. and XXXV.), Newfoundland (Fig. 86), Labrador (Fig. 88), English terriers (Figs. 89 and 90, and PLATE XXXII.), pointer (Fig. 91), deerhound (Figs. 92, 95, and 99, and

FIG. 90.—BOB (1825).

PLATE XXXV.), collies (Figs. 93, 94, and 96), nondescripts (Figs. 97 and 98), Dandie Dinmont (Fig. 99 and PLATE XXXV), setters, mastiff and greyhound (PLATE XXXI.), German badger-hound (PLATE XXXIII.), and beagle (PLATE XXXIV.). All these dogs, and many more, did he draw, in every variety of posture and employment, and animated by every variety of canine sentiment.

The only classification of interest to us is that of the different aspects in which the dog appealed to the interest of the artist; and first amongst these, let us place the dog as a masterpiece of natural organization. From the first, whether a dog or other animal, Landseer's view was a complete one. He took in the whole of it at once, and though

HEAD OF DACHEL (1840).

PLATE XXXIII.

some parts may have been more truly drawn at first than others, there was seldom or ever any doubt as to its general appearance and character. His conception was always perfect, whatever his power of realizing it; and even in his earliest drawings any mistake is carried through the work with a kind of correlation of error, which preserved its unity, and made anything less than a facsimile a vitiation of the original, and this fact should always be borne in mind when observing any defects in our woodcuts. This gift of conception was the special mark of his genius, the basis of the unexampled success of his work, and the point in which it differs most essentially

FIG. 91.—AMONG THE HILLS.

from that of inferior artists. It is this that raises his "Sleeping Blood-hound" to the rank of sculpture, and gives artistic value to his merest portrait of a pet.

The next aspect in which dogs interested Landseer was as the possessors of a variety of natural habits and instincts. Their manners of walking, or bounding, or sleeping, or waking, every gesture of the paw or turn of the head or expression of the eye, the watchfulness of some, the laziness of others, their courage, their pugnacity, their pertinacity, their natural hatred of other animals, their fondness for each other, their marvellous gift of scent—all these and many more properties natural to

A Beagle.

the dog, formed a field of observation and study of which he was never tired. It is this which gives such variety and truth to his work that no two dogs from his hand ever seem alike, and which makes them interesting always as dogs, whatever the sentiment, human or otherwise, with which he may inspire them. His "Comical Dogs" would remain and be delightful as dogs without the mob-cap and the pipe, and his "Alexander" and any of his courtiers, cut out from the picture, would be nothing more than a dog, doggy from the expression of his eye to the curve of his tail. If he sometimes strained their faculty of human expression, it was only a

FIG. 92.—ON THE LOOK-OUT (1827).

strain, and not a wrench—exaggeration, if you like, of what was true, but never an addition of what was false. For illustrations of Landseer's sense of form and observation of natural habit, there is no need to go beyond the illustrations to this chapter. In "Cora" (Fig. 88) we have a dog hastily drawn, but magnificent in *pose*, and thoroughly characteristic in attitude. In "In the Warren" (Fig. 89) we have two studies of different views of the same dog, eager in pursuit of rats, and palpitating with excitement. Equally fine as examples of natural canine character are the "Dogs at Bay" and "On the Watch" on PLATE XXXII. But though Landseer never lost

sight of the underlying natural canine character, he, comparatively early in his life, abandoned it as the one and sufficient motive of his composition. After 1824 we have no more "Fighting Dogs getting Wind," "Larders invaded," or "Impending Quarrels" (Fig. 23), but man asserts his right to be considered, even in relation to the dog.

The point of view from which the dog was of most interest to Landseer (at all events for the greater part of his life) was as the associate of man. The relations of the dog to man are so many and so different, that it is almost as difficult to classify them as their physical and moral varieties; but at all events, as far as Landseer

FIG. 93.—REAPERS RESTING: GLEN FISHIE (1827).

is concerned they may be divided into three heads: (1) companions, (2) servants, (3) pets. To Landseer the companionship of a dog seemed almost as necessary as a hat or a stick. A man was not complete without a dog, and a dog was scarcely complete without a man. He seldom—except in portraits, and not often in them—drew one without the other, or, at least, the suggestion of the other. Even his "Sleeping Bloodhound" has a helmet near—not a mere accessory, but a necessary part of the composition. It is not only the shepherd in the fields, the deerstalker at rest, that has his dog, but the fisherman on the beach, the whiskey distiller in the Highlands, and even the dustman; and all differ as their masters, so that you may

almost know the man by his dog. The result of this companionship in raising the love of the dog to a degree hardly exceeded by human beings was the inspiration of some of Landseer's noblest thoughts and purest poetry—from his earliest to his latest work. The difference in feeling between "The Dustman's Dog" (Fig. 19), so patient of and subdued to his master's insignificance, and the "Dog howling on the Sea-coast," "The Old Shepherd's Chief Mourner," and "The Shepherd's Grave," is but a difference of degree, and "Suspense" is an example of the same devotion viewed in a romantic light.

As servants to man, if they did not suggest pictures of such deep sentiment,

Fig. 94.—A Shower in the Highlands (1828).

they suggested a greater number of them, and stimulate our admiration, if not our love, to the same degree. Their use in protecting our property, as shown in "Cora" and "Jack in Office;" their sagacity in rescuing from danger, as in the "Alpine Mastiffs reanimating a Distressed Traveller," or in "Saved," or in the "Distinguished Member of the Humane Society;" their invaluable assistance in our sports, whether in setting a hare, destroying rats, pulling down stags, or hunting an otter; their co-operation in gathering our sheep, and even digging them out of the snow; and the devotion of their eyesight to the poor blind man: these are some of the many instances in which Landseer showed his appreciation of the services of dogs.

Lastly as pets—dogs which give us pleasure for their beauty, or their amiability,

A Dandie Dinmont (1842).

Eos and Cairnach (1844).

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Plate XXXV.

their cleverness, or their eccentricity, or as objects for the employment of surplus affection—dogs of which we should like portraits. Of these little need be said, for the qualities necessary to paint such pictures are included in those we have already mentioned as possessed by Landseer to a greater degree than any other animal painter before or since. Of them we give many examples in illustration of this chapter, all remarkable for their beauty and character, but none so wonderful as a masterly piece of sketching as the little Scotch terrier with a letter in his mouth, on page 99. This sketch,

FIG. 95.—HIGH LIFE (1829).

as it is, would form no unworthy companion to one of the most exquisite little etchings ever produced, viz., one of her Majesty's favourite Scotch terrier Islay, begging, executed by Sir Edwin and bit in by his brother, Mr. Thomas Landseer, in the presence of the Queen. This was one of the most rapid pieces of work that ever Sir Edwin accomplished. Instead of being little more than an outline, like Fig. 87, every tuft of its coat is finished to the highest degree, and yet he was but thirty minutes in completing it, and in ten minutes more the plate was ready for printing.

But we have not yet mentioned the aspect most special to the artist in which he regarded dogs, viz., as reflecting human feelings and character. Of the sorrowful reflections we have already said enough in the course of this and other chapters, and it is as a humorist only that we wish to regard Sir Edwin now. Of the many points in which Hogarth and Landseer seem to us to meet there is none more decided (as might be expected) than in humour; but they meet as artists and not as men, as will be seen at once by the portraits of Hogarth with his dog and Sir Edwin with his dogs, each drawn by the artist himself. The trenchant look of Hogarth's unsympathetic face is not more different from the kindly intelligence of Landseer's, than Hogarth's cynical

FIG. 96.—THE RESCUE (1834).

pug from Landseer's good-tempered connoisseurs. The one was a satirist in grain, the other a humorist only. The one was always deeply, almost savagely, in earnest, cutting down to the bone of society, like a moral surgeon; the other did not even try to cut, he did not even treat diseases; he was only a spectator of human life, and only cared to draw such follies as were amusing, and to draw them in such a way that the satirised could join in the laugh. In the picture of "Alexander and Diogenes" the group of canine flatterers comes nearest to the visitors at the levee scene in the "Marriage à la Mode" of any picture with which we are acquainted, both in the variety of social folly expressed, and the perfectness of the expression; but the spirits of the two works are as wide asunder as the poles. In this picture Landseer has shown with

his greatest power the likeness that exists between human and canine character. Except in the two scandal-mongers, who are evidently indulging in remarks which no dog could even *seem* to make, there is no figure in the picture which might not be a photograph from real life. Dogs look quite as bullying and supercilious as the Alexander, quite as wise as the Diogenes, quite as cringing as the spaniels, quite as solemn and inane as the bloodhounds. Landseer has only put them together. There is undoubtedly satire in showing that our fine airs and pride and wisdom can be so well imitated by dogs; but it is a satire at which we can all afford to laugh, because the wisdom is ridiculed as much as the folly, and the whole thing is evidently

Fig. 97.—On the Beach (1840).

a little play for our amusement. In the "Jack in Office" the satire is a little deeper in the "Jack," whose "insolence of office" is, in its vulgarity and conceit and selfishness, a lesson which we might well take to heart, if it were not for the fact that he is quite right in keeping watch on his master's property, and that the curs that surround his barrow are cowardly thieves. This spoils the lesson of the picture as a whole, and leaves it what it was intended to be—a thing of mirth.

To be considered a satirist in a true sense we think Landseer has no claim; but in drawing mirth from the analogies between human and canine life and human and canine expression, there was no limit to his talent. What can be more humorous,

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